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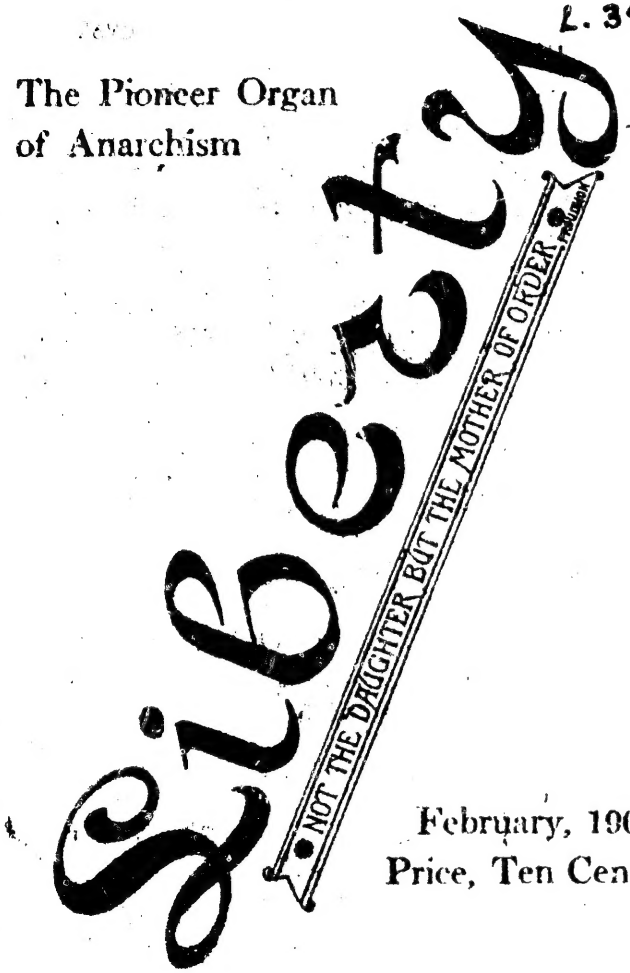
The Pioneer Organ
of Anarchism



February, 1906
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L. 391

"For always in thine eyes, O Liberty!
Shines that high light whereby the world is saved;
And though thou slay us, we will trust in thee."
JOHN HAY.

LIBERTY

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"In abolishing rent and interest, the last vestiges of old-time slavery, the Revolution abolishes at one stroke the sword of the executioner, the seal of the magistrate, the club of the policeman, the gauge of the exciseman, the erasing-knife of the department clerk, all those insignia of Politics, which young Liberty grinds beneath her heel."—EVOLUTION.

LIBERTY

Vol. XV No. 4 FEBRUARY, 1906 Whole No. 394

ON PICKET DUTY

Liberty expects to greet its readers bimonthly hereafter, in the form given to the present issue,—a pamphlet of sixty-four pages. It is with reluctance that I abandon the old form, which has served my purpose so satisfactorily for nearly a quarter of a century. But there are compelling reasons for the change. In the first place, to avoid governmental supervision, annoyance, and censorship, I have decided not to seek re-entry of the publication as second-class matter, but to mail it always at third-class rates; and, to do this economically, each copy must be made to weigh a shade less than two ounces or some multiple thereof. The pamphlet form fits itself to this requirement more easily than the newspaper form, and this change to third-class matter enables me to mail the publication when and where I like and in such quantities as I like, to mail it with other matter in one wrapper if I choose, to print what I choose on the wrapper, and to print in the publication itself as many pages of my own advertising matter as I may find serviceable without subjecting myself, my subscribers, or my other advertisers, to impudent interrogation from officials of the United States government. In the second place, the adoption of a page of the present size, not only for

Liberty, but for the books and pamphlets which it is my intention to issue hereafter, which books and pamphlets also will carry advertising matter, enables me to interchange the advertising pages at will, and, when it seems best, to publish in pamphlet form matter that has appeared in Liberty, thus saving the cost of re-composition.

The business of publishing books and pamphlets, alluded to in the foregoing paragraph, will be conducted by me in pursuance of a policy lately approved by the New York "Evening Post" for university purposes. Urging that each large university should have its own press, and deploring the high prices and consequent small circulation of serious literature in this country as compared with France, the "Post" well says:

> In France, with less than forty millions of people, there are probably from five to ten persons who buy serious books to one in the English-speaking countries with nearly four times the population. If that is only approximately so, it is a terrible reproach to our civilization; and it is partly the result of the inflated prices charged for new works of serious literature. It should not be forgotten that the class of the community which buys, or might buy, such books, is one that feels very keenly the difference between paying less than a dollar or from two to six dollars. In Paris the publisher who should raise his price would lose his public; in London or New York the publisher who should lower his price would find the public unprepared and irresponsive. From the publishers there is little to hope save cheap reprints of works out of copyright; but might not an endowed press, working with steady policy over a course of years, help us? By inflexibly demanding adequate literary expression, by standardizing its prices at a low figure, by giving unknown authors a chance on their merits, by supporting scholars in difficult but little-trodden paths, it might serve a great national purpose.

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In my own small way, with such means as I can command, and in my special field, I purpose doing this very thing,—publishing at reasonable prices books and pamphlets, whether new or old, whose importance can hardly be over-estimated, but which offer too little promise of profit to induce other publishers to undertake their issue. In other words, I have "endowed" my own press, and, meagre as the endowment necessarily is, it is sufficient at any rate to guarantee the continuance of the work indefinitely.

The first publication, under the plan above outlined, will be a new edition, from new plates, of "Mutual Banking," by Col. William B. Greene. This little pamphlet, the most important work on finance ever published in this country, has already passed through several editions; but in none of them has the form been worthy of the contents. The new edition is reasonably sure to escape this criticism; moreover, it will be the first edition to contain a portrait of the author,—a fact which will cause it to be sought after even by possessors of the older editions. It will contain more than a hundred pages, will be sold for ten cents a copy, and will appear early in February.

In connection with the publishing business I shall carry on a small bookstore, and for this purpose have secured a room at No. 225 Fourth Avenue, a light and airy office on the twelfth floor of an elevator office-building, commanding a fine outlook over the city. Here I hope to carry ultimately the most complete line of advanced literature, in the principal languages,

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to be found anywhere in the world. By advanced literature I mean the literature which, in religion and morals, leads away from superstition, which, in politics, leads away from government, and which, in art, leads away from tradition. It will take many months, perhaps years, to attain this end, but it will not take long to make a beginning; and within a very few weeks, or even days, those who may see fit to visit the store will find upon the shelves a fairly representative stock, which they are cordially invited to examine at their leisure.

I wish to obtain a considerable number of copies of whole No. 300 of Liberty. For the first copy that shall reach me in presentable condition I will pay one dollar to the sender, and for each copy arriving thereafter I will pay fifty cents to the sender, until I shall have twenty-five copies in my possession. The dollar offer is unconditional; the fifty-cent offer, however, is qualified by the condition that there shall be a total receipt of at least twenty-five copies. If on March 1 I have not received twenty-five copies, all save the first copy will be returned. I also invite correspondence with any person willing to sell one or more of the following issues: Whole Nos. 5, 32, 116, 346, and 380.

Referring to the "We Don't Patronize List" which appears in the pages of the "American Federationist," the organ of the Federation of Labor, the New York "Sun" says: "A manufacturer's blacklist is denounced by unionism as a crime against society. Its own blacklist is regarded as a legitimate weapon. It

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tations, but liberal and constitutional ones as well. Reaction is admittedly a strong probability, and the really substantial victories of October may be forfeited. Of course, human nature is human nature, and it were both idle and unfair to blame the distracted and exasperated Russian radicals for the turn events have taken. Witte has not been honest; the Bourbons were at no time in actual fear of his liberalism. Quite likely any other body of men would have acted as the Russian intellectuals and proletariat committees have acted. Still, the fact remains that, had the policy of strictly passive resistance been continued, and had not the strike and boycott weapon been too recklessly used, the cause of freedom and progress in Russia would today rejoice in much brighter prospects. Whatever reform Russia shall be shown by developments to have secured, she will certainly owe to the peaceful demonstration of the "Red Sunday" and to the passive strike.

Things have come to such a pass that no American traveller can return from a trip abroad without being made to blush for his country. On the westbound ocean steamers every passenger of foreign birth, whether in steerage or cabin, is required, during the voyage, to fill out a blank form with answers to a score or more of questions, some of the last degree of impudence, others of the last degree of idiocy. Here are some of the questions: "Have you fifty dollars with you?" "If not, how much have you?" "Have you ever been in prison?" "Were you ever in the poor house?" "Are you deformed or crippled?"

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"If so, how came you so?" "Are you a polygamist?" "Are you an Anarchist?" "Are you in good health, physical and mental?" The paper warns the passenger that, on landing, he may be required to swear to the truth of his answers, and that, if he swears falsely, he will be sent to prison. It must be admitted, however, that the circulation of these blanks on shipboard has one virtue: it serves to greatly relieve the tedium of an ocean voyage. On the last trip that I made it was the chief topic of conversation, and at sea anything that "causes talk" is a blessing. My next neighbor in the dining-room was a young Englishman. Little knowing who I was, he produced his blank at table. "Have you seen these questions?" said he: "just look at this one, for instance: 'Are you an Anarchist?' As if any one would admit it under such circumstances! My answer to that will be: 'Not at present, with hopes for the future.'" Another passenger's answer was: "I was not an Anarchist until I read these questions." Still another said: "If he who carries bombs is an Anarchist, No; if he who resents inquisition is an Anarchist, Yes." While, under the question: "Are you in good health, physical and mental?" one man wrote: "I am mad." And so it went. It was all very entertaining; but to every American it was also very painful to see his country made, and with good reason, the butt of ridicule. Suppose England were to pass a law for the exclusion of foreign prostitutes; what in that case would be the feelings of an American citizen whose wife or daughter, before landing in England, should be confronted officially with the question: "Are you a harlot?" It

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would be a fine stroke of justice if precisely such a fate could befall every congressman who voted for the silly and abominable law under which questions equally impudent and scarcely less horrible are plumped at every man and woman visiting these shores.

In the tributes paid by the newspapers to the late Marshall Field much stress is laid on the statement that, unlike many other money magnates, he accumulated his wealth by legitimate methods. It is probably true, as the New York "Evening Post" says, that "to his money none of that taint attached which comes of building up a fortune upon the deliberately planned wreck of the property of others." But, when the "Post" declares that "no ruin-spreading monopoly could be pointed to as the source of his great riches," it goes too far. The "Post" knows very well that the protective tariff creates a "ruin-spreading monopoly," and it has especial reason to remember the advantages derived from the tariff by merchants like Marshall Field, for it is not many years since these very merchants organized a boycott of its advertising columns because of its advocacy of tariff reform. The "Post" does not know, or at any rate does not say, that the legal restrictions upon banking create a "ruin-spreading monopoly," but such is the fact; and Marshall Field profited handsomely by the absence of that sharper competition which would have held him in check under a really free banking system. Furthermore, but a comparatively small portion of Mr. Field's vast wealth was derived directly from his mercantile pursuits. Most of it came through shrewd outside investments. It is probable that he was a large stockholder in most of the gigantic corporations that have been built "upon the deliberately planned wreck of the property of others," and it is sure that he was an enormous beneficiary of increase in land values, which he could not have been but for that "ruin-spreading monopoly" which vests land-titles in non-occupants and non-users. Field did not actively practise the methods of Rockefeller, but he benefited by them. He did not inspire the dislike that most of us feel for Rockefeller, but his money, no less than Rockefeller's, was tainted.

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Under cover of its tribute to Marshall Field, the "Evening Post" bestows a nasty kick on Andrew Carnegie. "Though Mr. Field's public gifts were not large in proportion to his means, he at least bestowed them in a way to carry no sting. He gave freely and outright, when he did give. Not for him was the odious plan of 'stimulating benevolence in others,' by giving grudgingly of his abundance on condition that as much be extracted from the poverty of others. Thus his charities were, if not great relatively, at least not the offensive acts of a man who was at heart a miser." A singular declaration, in view of the fact that Mr. Field's $8,000,000 bequest for the endowment and maintenance of the Field Columbian Museum is made upon the express condition that within six years from the death of Mr. Field there shall be provided, without cost to the estate, a satisfactory site for the permanent home of the museum. This method of giving, far from being grudging or miserly, shows

great wisdom in the giver, and no less in Mr. Carnegie's case than in Mr. Field's.

The New York "Sun," taking a similar view to that of the "Evening Post," says of Marshall Field that "his business methods were honorable"; that "he did not bilk or prey upon the public", that he did not seek public respect through "staring philanthropies"; and that "he did not try to cover up doubtful transactions with a halo or to bribe his way into 'society' or heaven with benefactions in the nature of repentance." And because he did not do these things, declares the "Sun," "the red-mouthed yapping at the rich spared him." But the "Sun," in thus holding up Mr. Field as an exceptional case, virtually charges that most other possessors of fortunes as large as Mr. Field's are in the habit of doing precisely the things that he did not do. Now, if the making of these charges by the "Sun" is legitimate criticism, why do the same charges, when made by an Anarchist, become "red-mouthed yapping at the rich"?

Some months ago Gustave Hervé, Urbain Gohier, and a number of other conspicuous members of the French anti-military party signed a poster advising French soldiers, when ordered to fire on strikers, to turn their guns on their officers, and this poster was put up in various parts of Paris. The signers were arrested, and in December, after an exciting trial, nearly all were convicted and received severe sentences. Two or three, however, were acquitted, though they were quite as guilty as the others, and one of the fortunate ones was the famous Italian revolutionist, Amilcare Cipriani, who, it seems, once rendered the French nation a great service in an hour of peril. The day after his acquittal Cipriani again proceeded with the placarding of Paris with the original poster, this time, however, signed by himself only and having the following appendix:

> In company with twenty-seven comrades I signed this poster. By acquitting me, on December 30, the Seine jury has proclaimed that I committed no crime. It has recognized my right of propagandism. I make use of it.

Cipriani may be lacking in gratitude, but there's nothing the matter with his logic or his sense of humor.

When Theodore Roosevelt, writing to Henry M. Whitney, charged his correspondent with "lacking the power of exact thinking," it was hardly an instance of condemnation from Sir Hubert.

Whether we have or have not an emperor in the United States,—on which point judgment may be reserved till Roosevelt and the senate and house get through with each other,—it is at least clear that we have a crown princess fully developed.

"And the said defendant is hereby enjoined from wooing or making love to Mary E. Brown." Thus runs a clause in an order issued recently by Judge Moss of the circuit court at Parkersburg, West Virginia. The defendant is William Brown, and the woman to whom he is ordered to cease making love is his wife. Mrs. Brown recently filed suit for divorce, and since their estrangement the husband has been

trying to woo his spouse over again. So do our courts protect the sacred institution of marriage. A judge in a monthly-magazine story would have been busy helping the parties to get reconciled, and straining the law for that purpose till you could hear it crack.

Among the "tributes from educators" printed in the newspapers at the time of the death of Dr. William R. Harper I saw no mention of President Eliot's old-time characterization of the University of Chicago as "Harper's Bazar."

Justice Rogers, of the New York supreme court, in imposing a severe sentence on a violator of the election laws, declared: "There is too much illegal voting done in this large city." This judge seems to have formed an idea of the amount of illegal voting that can be allowed to the square mile with propriety. Perhaps he took his cue from Boss Odell, who, in an unprecedented burst of candor, said recently to a New York "World" reporter: "I have always believed that there were more election frauds committed here than there should be."

Why does not Moses Harman, who is being so shamefully persecuted by the post office department, mail "Lucifer" at third-class rates, in small lots, at different times, and at different post-offices? By so doing he certainly would lead the national censor a lively chase, and perhaps would tire him out. Such a course would cost but twenty-five cents a year for each subscriber, and "Lucifer's" readers seem willing

to pay for the privilege of receiving their paper. To do this is, of course, to submit to an outrageous discrimination, but it is sometimes better to pay an unjust tax than to be deprived of one's liberty of speech.

Mr. William Bailie's life of Josiah Warren, published by Small, Maynard & Co., is now ready for delivery, and is for sale at the office of Liberty. It is very prettily gotten up, and its contents are of high interest to every Anarchist. A later issue will contain a review of the work, discussing its merits, of which it has an abundance, and its demerits, from which, unhappily, it is not free.

Perhaps some of the older readers of Liberty can give Max Nettlau, the bibliographer of Anarchism, the information which he asks for in the interesting article that I reprint from "Freedom." I have never seen the pamphlet of which he writes, but there are references in some numbers of Warren's "Periodical Letter" which indicate that Mr. Nettlau is correct in his surmise that A. C. Cuddon was its author. I think that I met Mr. Cuddon in London in 1874; though considerably more than eighty years of age, he was as enthusiastic a disciple of Warren as ever. Mr. Henry Edger too, the Positivist of whom Mr. Nettlau writes, I met once in New York in 1877, and, as a result of this meeting, he wrote for the "Radical Review," the quarterly which I published in 1877-78 in New Bedford, Mass., a long article on "Prostitution and the International Woman's League." Now that Mr. Bailie's life of Warren has appeared, it is hardly nec-

essary to correct Mr. Nettlau's error in calling Warren an Englishman. On the other hand, what is left of the sect of Universologists will learn with joy from Mr. Nettlau's article that, though since the death of the Pantarch the usually necessary period of one hundred years is far from having elapsed, he has already gained admission to the calendar of the Saints. Mr. Nettlau's address is: Langham House, College Road, Harrow, Middlesex, England.

A Christian Science healer who failed to respond to a summons to do jury duty was fined therefor by a New York judge. The New York "Times" complains of the court for desiring such a juror. "Imagine," it says, "the verdict likely to be rendered by a jury containing a man who, not many years ago, gravely announced to a bewildered metropolis the belief that an inscription inaccurately chiseled on a block of granite had kindly corrected itself without any other assistance than the existence of a preference on the part of Mrs. Mary Baker Patterson Glover, &c., &c., Eddy, and a few of her worshippers that the inscription should read in another way!" Well, why should a verdict rendered by such a jury be less reasonable than one rendered by a jury containing a man who entertains the belief that Jesus of Nazareth was born of a virgin by a process known as immaculate conception? The theory of the "Times" will carry it far.

The Filipinos have made W. J. Bryan a Datto, but nobody in the world, Filipino or American, can make Mr. Bryan a Ditto.

WHAT WE FIND INSTEAD OF THE FOOT OF THE RAINBOW

I am indebted to a review in the "Advance" for my knowledge of a new book published by the Scribners, called "The City the Hope of Democracy." It is thus described:

Among the recent books on public questions the volume bearing the title above is one of the most important. It is from the pen of Frederic C. Howe, who says that his convictions are the result of several years of actual political experience in the administration of the city of Cleveland, and of personal study of municipal conditions in the leading cities of Great Britain and America. The author further states that his careful study of city problems compelled him to change from "belief in a business man's government to belief in a people's government." These two points he elaborates with a great array of facts and extensive argument.

In "a business man's government" Mr. Howe finds the principal cause of corruption. It is back of bossism, back of boodling, back of bribery, back of the whole business of exploiting the people. In this respect, as readers of the "Advance" need hardly be told, the author reaches the same conclusion as Lincoln Steffens. . . . That this statement reverses the view which prevailed a dozen years ago is obvious. Then the whole emphasis was laid on the danger of the democracy. The public was told every day in the week that the masses in the city were the source of corrupt government. Now, as Mr. Howe says, the public is beginning to realize that the real source of corruption is the big business which puts its own selfish interests before the common welfare. . . . The connection of the political boss with franchise corruption of cities is thus described: "The boss come in through political apathy. He has grown powerful through privilege. He is the natural and logical product of privilege, and he everywhere perpetuates his power through an alliance with it. And the privileges which he now represents are the great natural monopolies that make use of our streets, the companies which supply transportation, gas, water, electric light, and telephone service. The boss enjoys a dual *rôle;* he not only controls the party, but traffics in legislation. He has become a modern feudal baron, who does homage to his supe-

rior, levies tribute on society, and distributes favors to his retainers with a free hand, as did his prototypes of old. He is the link which unites the criminal rich with the criminal poor. For the former he obtains millions in grants and franchises, and immunity from taxes. To the latter, in payment of election services, he dispenses small gratuities in jobs, protection from the police, and in charities. He makes party regularity a merchantable asset, which he uses for his own political advancement and the promotion of these interests whose agent he is."

So we must reverse the view that was taught us a dozen years ago, must we? Not without stopping to think, I hope. Correct it, doubtless; but why reverse it? The dozen-year-old view was, I believe, that the boss's power was based in his relation to the unintelligent masses, to whom, in payment of election services, he dispensed small gratuities in jobs, protection from the police, and charities, whereby their vote became his merchantable asset which he used for his own political advancement and for his private enrichment by the sale of privilege to the criminal rich. How far from that are we now, after all, according to Mr. Howe?

In the nineteenth century, to be sure, the boss's supporters were supposed to be the poor in general; now, it seems, they are "the criminal poor." As they are apparently able to furnish the mass of votes which does the main work of carrying an election, it is rather disquieting to find the criminal poor so numerous a class. The charge is substantially equivalent to saying that the poor voters in general are criminal, for the election returns give us an idea of the number of men who must be described as "criminal poor" in order to explain the boss's majorities. Does it appear from Mr. Howe's statement what facts show them to be criminal? It does. They are criminals in that they

vote a ticket which has a chance of success at the polls. Well, we Anarchists always did maintain that this is a crime; so we will not be hard on Mr. Howe for agreeing with us. Furthermore, they are criminals in that their vote is determined by liking for the man's personal character (I confess that, in expounding the phrase "small gratuities in charities," I draw on my recollection of the explanations that were given us a dozen years ago; but am I wrong in so doing? the thing to be explained is the same, and the explanation is plausible and is confirmed by observations taken a dozen years ago) and by the fact that he administers the government in their interest so far as they understand it. Mr. Howe does not appear to charge that they realize the antagonism between their position and the public interest,—that they believe the "good fellow" who looks out for the poor in general and for his friends in particular to be in fact a plunderer of honest men and a tool of monopoly. Mr. Howe's position, so far as I am informed of it, seems quite consistent with what we heard a dozen years ago,—that they believe this ruler to be the real friend of the people, and the talk about "plunder" to be the moonshine of theorists who are out of touch with practical life; so we may give these voters full credit for sincerity. Are they criminals, then, in letting such considerations sway their vote? Doubtless: for by wilful and unjust aggression they kill thousands of men and women who ought to be left alive. Only it is getting more and more obvious that they are criminals of the sort who can never be jailed, because there are not enough jailors to keep them; that the words "criminal poor," if

they are meant to suggest that we are here dealing with a minor subdivision of the poor, are a gross perversion of fact; that it is just as we used to be told in the nineteenth century,—this is the type of the poor in general, and will be so as long as they continue to be unintelligent, which will be nobody knows how long; and that this same type is not especially peculiar to the poor, but is identical with the type of the successful, but narrow-minded, New England manufacturer who votes for the protective tariff in the firm belief that his business would go to the dogs if he had to compete with Europe without a tariff, and what is true of him is true of his neighbors, so free trade would ruin the country.

Or does Mr. Howe really mean that the boss derives his power, on the popular side, not from his control of a large body of voters, but from his control of a machinery for registering fictitious votes? Do the words "criminal poor" refer solely to those whose election-day services are of a nature legally punishable? No one doubts that bosses make great use of such agencies on occasion; but it is hardly plausible to say that this is their main source of power; and, if that were true, it would hardly be plausible to say that anything else than this should be the main point of attack in an attempt to purify elections. I think I was right in my first interpretation of the phrase "criminal poor."

The source of the boss's mandate to rule our municipalities, then, seems, even by Mr. Howe's account, to be essentially the same as it used to be said to be. In the presentation of his relation to the capitalist there is a greater difference observable. The capitalist and

the boss used to come before our minds as two mainly independent powers, bargaining with each other either for mutual profit at the expense of the public or for the terms of blackmail levied by the boss on the capitalist; and the boss was supposed to be a sort of robber baron, fortified in a castle where he could and did claim to be the superior party in the negotiation, whatever advantage the supple capitalist might gain over his pride. Now Mr. Howe presents the boss to us as the capitalist's tool and agent,—removable at the capitalist's will, we must suppose, else the alleged relation becomes practically unthinkable in so far as it differs from the old conception,—through whom the capitalist exercises in fact, by deputy, the powers which the boss had been supposed to exercise in his own behalf.

I believe there is truth in both views. I believe there have always been places where it was possible for the capitalist to keep a boss of his own, and capitalists who have seen and welcomed such an opportunity. I believe, on the other hand, that the boss tends to aspire to as much independence as he thinks he can defend, and that the nature of his position puts him under constant temptation to go to the verge of prudence in reaching out for independence. I think, if we could get the lid all off from the dealings between the two, we should see struggles for conquest or for independence so numerous as to be a noticeable feature of the situation, and success inclining now to one side and now to the other; and I am willing to believe that the tendencies of the last few years have made the capitalists' successes abnormally numerous. But I think the capitalists' hold on such power must always be very

uncertain, since the boss's power consists so largely in his reputation, and this reputation must adhere personally to the man who is publicly known as boss—cannot be kept under the control of any power behind the throne. If John Smith, capitalist, having made John Doe a boss, wants to unmake him, what is he to do? Doe controls the votes partly because he is known to be charitable to the poor, partly because he is known as a distributor of political patronage. Smith can sway most of the bribed vote, and most of the apparatus for conducting a campaign by means of printing, paid speakers, paid canvassers, etc.; but he must also have a man to present in Doe's place. If he presents his confidential clerk, Richard Roe, whose personal qualifications for such work are unquestioned, the fact that Roe is unknown to the voters will be a frightful handicap,—a handicap invincible for the time being, except by the difficult and dangerous process of buying up individually, with hard cash, a sufficient number of local sub-bosses. Practically Roe's chances would not be worth mentioning till he had spent some years getting himself before the bossable part of the public. Meanwhile Doe, controlling the government, will have half ruined Smith's local business. Consequently Smith is driven to fall back on Tom Styles, who is already in politics and has the political assets which a judicious addition of money will transform into dominion. But Styles is already in some sort of relations with Doe; and the game to be played is one in which Doe is a specialist, while Smith is dependent on his subordinate for technique. Doe is described in the papers as "making the fight of his

life," and is getting money from a rival capitalist by flattering offers; and many are the voters who think it best to stand by the old man. Will it not pay Smith best, if Doe is willing to do business on reasonable terms, to treat with him as an equal rather than try to crush him? I am assuming circumstances favorable to Doe, but not extraordinarily so; it is at least likely that Smith will have to wait a year or two till he can get a favorable opening, and time may work in Doe's favor instead of his own.

The point is that so much of the boss's power is non-transferable. Part of it can be duplicated, and another part conquered away from him, but both the duplicating and the conquering take time, and time is money to the capitalist. I cannot think, therefore, that he will, as a rule, keep in efficient condition that power of removal which is essential to complete domination. But assume the case where he does it—what then? In a city where the known boss is a puppet, and a capitalist is the real boss, what of it?* Simply that we mistook the identity of our boss. There is a boss, just as we thought there was; and the voters are controlled, and the elections are carried, by the same means as we always supposed did the work. The inference is simply that in our reform movements we

* Mr. Howe is talking of cities, and so am I. In a State legislature the large area covered, and the presence of the rural vote, tend to weaken the power of the boss as a man and make it easier for money to dwarf him. Hence we often hear of a State being owned by a railroad company, while a city is always said to be owned by a man or a ring. The members of the ring may be the leading stockholders of a corporation, but it is as men, not as money-bags, that they boss the city. Their money is a tool of their political power, and is their motive for holding the power; but the power does not consist in the money.

must no longer trust this man whom we thought we could trust as a possible ally against the boss. Now, this lesson is well worth writing a book about, or a dozen books; but it does not cancel the lessons of a dozen years ago; they remain valid, and we add the new lesson to them.

Mr. Howe draws the lesson differently: he insists that we should have municipal ownership of valuable franchises, in order that there may not be these rich plums to attract capitalists to control the boss. Now, surely this is irrelevant unless the capitalist is the cause of the boss; and Mr. Howe seems really to think that this is so. But how is the capitalist supposed to cause the boss? It must be either by giving him his means, or by furnishing him his motive. The boss would continue if the capitalist were gone, if means and motive were still present; and assuredly they would be present. Money can hardly be said to occupy a foremost place among the means of the city boss, especially if you restrict it to such money as the capitalist may be supposed to furnish him: if you utterly destroy bribery funds out of politics, but double the number of jobs to be given out in the city service, you may be sure you have not made the boss less able to hold his power. As for motive, I have no ground for disputing that the capitalist's money may be foremost among the motives which actuate the boss at the present day; and, if I tried to deny it, the testimony of Mr. Howe might well be conclusive against me. But in its absence other motives would come into play,—motives quite strong enough to make a man act as boss. It is difficult to conceive a great city govern-

ment in which the plums of the administration, provided a man wishes to administer corruptly, could not be made big enough to give a considerable pecuniary motive; and, even if money could all be done away, the mere love of power, or the desire to accomplish some purpose for which the control of political power is needed, would suffice to draw men into this career. The matter can be put in a nutshell. If John Doe had devoted himself to banking, he might have made a million. If he had devoted himself to manufacturing, he might have made half a million. But he did, when he was starting in life, devote himself to politics, and he did so well in it that he is able to be boss of the city. Now, if the place of boss is worth five millions, he gets the five millions; but, if it is worth only a hundred thousand, he still puts his whole strength into being boss, for the good reason that, if he were to go into banking or manufacturing now, when he is getting into middle age, he could not hope to make more than ten thousand. Some circumstance, joined perhaps to a natural bent, started him as a politician: as soon as he has won a standing in politics, and has not yet won any equally strong standing in any other line of life, it will take something unusual to keep him from going on as a politician, be the rewards great or small. All that you could hope to accomplish by lessening the boss's rewards would be to give us a less able race of bosses: or, if you could very considerably diminish the money rewards, to give us a race of bosses actuated by different motives. These different motives might be better than the motives of the present bosses, or they might not.

The milk in Mr. Howe's cocoanut, I think, is this. We have had bad government, and have thought of various ways to get rid of it. One of these ways, which many had pinned their faith to, was to put the government in the hands of the business men. Mr. Howe has shown up this fallacy, and thus, we may hope, saved many from spending more energy on this false line. But, when he tells us to go back to the old theory of trusting the honest patriotism and sturdy common sense of the masses, he has no basis to go on. We have tried that and found it wanting, and the experience is still valid and even still current. How does a comparison of the New York city election of 1905 with that of 1886 Hearst in the place of George, McClellan in the place of Hewitt, Ivins in the place of Roosevelt, the Tammany candidate each time counted in, the labor candidate each time claiming to have had an actual majority—show that the masses are more to be trusted politically now than then? When you are after the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow, never turn back to a place where you have already looked in vain. That, at least, is not the nature of rainbows. Better say that good government is to be had by educating the people into sound political principles; by seeking your rainbow on a mountain-top so distant as that, you will have the pleasure of a long walk in hope, before you suffer the disappointment of getting there and seeing what you find.

The project of securing good government has been tried in many shapes, and has failed in each shape. The longer the list of failures grows, the more must the thought recur that the project of doing away with

government, and leaving all that government now does to be conducted on the basis of ordinary business, has never in a civilized country been tried and found to fail. STEVEN T. BYINGTON

WHAT NEXT IN RUSSIA?

The march of events in Russia affords a striking confirmation of the truth that the maintenance of the State depends upon organized brute force. Without an army and navy no government can successfully impose its authority upon a people. The Russian revolt proves to all the world that there, at least, bayonet and cannon are the only pillars of authority, and that these are fast crumbling away.

The growth of representative institutions obscures the primal nature of the State, though under its most democratic form physical force is still its ultimate foundation. In this land of the free few would accept the idea that a government born of the Declaration of Independence, purporting to rest upon the will of the people, has anything in common with the military despotism now in process of disintegration in northern Europe. Yet the most patriotic American will not hesitate to condemn the government of the czar. Nor is it difficult to comprehend how a downtrodden race, enthralled by superstition, ignorance, and want, could so long submit to a blighting and cruel *régime*. For generations they have been forced to cringe and crawl, until blind faith and passive fatalism are traits of national character. But even here we see that the spirit of liberty still lives.

At an early period the conquest of Russia by the

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Tartars arrested the normal development of the people and threw them back on their religion. In opposition to the heathen conquerors, the Byzantine form of superstition, magnified in importance, soon became a national bond gradually personified in the person of the czar.

To note an analogous instance, it is also the blending of religion and nationality in Ireland which has held her for centuries an easy prey to English domination. Had the people been able to unite against the conqueror, regardless of creed, political freedom would have been achieved long before the advent of Grattan's abortive parliament toward the close of the eighteenth century. Superstition here was utilized by an alien government to hold a nation in subjection, while in Russia it worked hand in hand with the native rulers, enabling them to fasten both an ecclesiastical hierarchy and a political despotism upon the people.

When the Tartar rule was finally overthrown in Russia, three leading consequences historically followed: the nation was politically unified, autocracy firmly established, and serfdom first imposed upon the masses. The enslavement of the cultivators was accomplished during a period when land was plentiful and labor scarce. There would have been no need for such a step, if the economic conditions had been reversed. With land scarce and free labor abundant, the dominant class could have secured a revenue by exploitation without resorting to so drastic a measure. It happened, too, when in other parts of Europe, owing to the growing scarcity of free land, serfdom was disappearing.

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In building up absolute power the crown, in order to insure the loyalty and support of the landed aristocracy, aided them through a series of enactments to perfect an economic revolution, which legally transformed the people from a condition of rude freedom into slaves of the soil for the benefit of the proprietors.

Of their ancient liberties one institution alone remained to the peasants, the *Mir*. By cultivating mutual aid it enabled them too long to endure unjust exploitation; but it also rendered the serfs an easier prey to the rapacity of their rulers. As a tax-collecting agency the *Mir* became a highly efficient and serviceable tool of the government. The peasants were thus held responsible collectively for taxes. Wherever he went, whatever opportunities to improve his fortune the peasant might find elsewhere, the commune could claim him, could compel him to return, to work off his share of the tax burden. After emancipation he was "holdfast" to his commune, just as he had been to his master. There has now grown up a new generation, with some glimmering of desire for individual rights and less faith in the "little father," a younger race born since the days of serfdom, which finds the old customs and conditions irksome. This change in ideas has helped to make the revolution possible.

In the past all progress seemed hopeless. The historic events that made for freedom in western Europe had no influence on the masses in Russia. The Renaissance, the Reformation, the discovery of America, the French Revolution, the teachings of science, touched not the life of the people. There was no natural

growth toward free institutions. If complaints were made, the czar emitted ukases instead of remedies. If the laws worked ill, more laws were promulgated, which wrought more ill. Feats the most impossible and contradictory have been attempted through laws by the all-wise autocrat, only to display the folly of his labors.

Until comparatively recent times no middle class, no professional classes, had arisen. The nobility, made up largely of those in the government service, from whatever social rank they sprang, served always as a reliable and convenient instrument to keep the people down. When at length a class emerged, neither nobles nor peasants, and began to accumulate property, it was inevitable that they should desire political rights and seek representation in the government. It is this steadily-growing propertied class, which comes neither from bottom nor top of the social structure, though reënforced from both, that for more than half a century has furnished the leaven of aspiration and effort at last ripened into a nation in revolt.

Those who read history only through the doings of its figureheads and heroes will continue to credit Alexander II with the emancipation of the serfs, just as they ascribe the abolition of slavery in America to Lincoln. Emancipation was not the free gift of a generous ruler; it was an economic necessity to which the law reluctantly and half-heartedly gave recognition. Serfdom did not pay, and was a failure industrially long before it was abolished. And the reactionary measures in the interest of the landowners, that hindered the reforms essential to complete the work of

emancipation, have wrought untold suffering and injustice upon the peasants. Liberty without free land and exemption from ruinous taxation was an idle mockery, leaving the peasant as he is to-day,—helpless, dependent, and in abject poverty.

Under serfdom the government was upheld by the landed nobility, because, in order to secure to them their privileges, the State was necessary to the proprietors. But, since the emancipation, with revenues much diminished, the economic power of the landed class has dwindled, and therefore they have ceased to be a potent factor in the government. Yet, while the proprietors have lost, neither the peasantry nor the commercial classes have gained political power. Herein lies the anomaly of a government trying to maintain itself, though representing none of the component economic or propertied classes of the nation. The military organization, no longer, as in the past, identified with landed property, therefore becomes the sole reliance of the government.

In any country in time of peace it is well known that the military establishment is itching for a fight, thirsting for the opportunity to practise its murderous vocation. It is usually, however, restrained by the more potent commercial and property interests supporting the State. But, just as soon as this restraint becomes inoperative, the military class, regardless alike of just cause or adequate preparation, will plunge headlong into war. Under such circumstances Russia was driven to fight Japan. With the same irresponsible fatuity Louis Napoleon in 1870 dragged the French into a war for which his government was ut-

terly unprepared. In both instances the disastrous consequences led to internal revolution. It would be no hard task to show by classic citation that nations which tamely submit to the rule of unscrupulous despots, even if these be elected presidents or legislative assemblies, must surely reap in tears and blood the fruits of their supine indifference.

All classes in Russia outside the military were opposed to the late war. But, as already noted, none had any control over the acts of the autocracy. Japan's success convinced the people that the government, with all its armies, was not invincible. Beaten and demoralized by a despised foe, the army and navy at last began to waver in their loyalty. With popular revolt blazing out all over the empire, and open mutiny confronting them, the czar and his advisers prepare to temporize. A constitution is promulgated, yet no class or party is satisfied. The belief grows that the czar and his Cossack assassins will be unable to stifle the just demands of the nation.

Desperate, impotent, despised, cursed, hated, its hands reeking with the people's innocent blood, despotism is doomed. Standing for an obsolete past, a phantom tradition, a hopeless future, it must succumb before the rising social forces that have undermined it. Whether it take months or years, the transformation is assured. The old *régime* can never be revived.

No illusions should be cherished about the future of Russia. The State will not, with all its crimes, be overthrown. It will, at best, only change hands. The upshot of the present crisis will be a shifting of power. In the end the dominant propertied interests will gain

control. Already the commercial, industrial, and professional classes are becoming the strongest social force. It is their demands, their efforts, that have brought the crisis to a head. As happened in other countries in the past, they enlist the working classes under their banners. The peasants will not, to any great extent, act with the revolutionaries.

After the revolution shall have performed its main work,—the overthrow of autocracy and establishment of constitutional government,—the working class and their Socialist allies will discover that their plans have miscarried. A stronger force than they had shaped them to its ends.

Instead of landed property, for which it formerly stood, the State in Russia will in the near future represent capitalist property. In a word, it will become a modern State. Their identity with the old *régime* and their present weakness will prevent the remnant of the landed class from gaining much share in the government. The peasants will, therefore, at the expense of their former masters, obtain extended rights in the land, because the dominant class in the State can always afford to be generous at the expense of another class whose day of power has passed. The working people, notwithstanding their sacrifices for liberty, will find that they possess no larger measure of freedom or independence than their brethren in Germany, France, or other European countries. Political rights, perhaps universal suffrage, will be attained, but the achievement of economic liberty will remain far off in the future.

In spite of disappointment and defeat, the people

will not abandon the hopes and ideals for which they have suffered and bled. Uprisings against the new order, as against the old, will surely occur. But, under the coming *régime* of capital, such revolutionary efforts will prove even less successful than in the past. Nevertheless the attainment of so-called free political institutions is a step on the way toward the larger freedom which is the goal of social evolution.

WILLIAM BAILIE.

INSURANCE AND GOVERNMENTAL "PROTECTION"

The New York legislative inquiry into the methods and practices of the life insurance companies has been very useful. It has unmasked "respectable" grafters, embezzlers, and pirates. It has afforded fresh evidence of the rottenness of "high finance," and has exposed the sickening hypocrisy of the pillars of law and order. The good, dull moral people who, outraged by isolated instances of "labor" graft or of "slugging," frantically demand the fearless enforcement of the criminal statutes will sing low for a time. The shallow optimists who have seen nothing but benevolence and "duty" in the criminal adventures of our government in the Philippines, on the Panama isthmus, and elsewhere, demoralized by the revelations of rascality and treachery in the upper business strata, are demanding in despair that the American people "raise the black flag" and manfully avow that the dollar is their only religion, law, and moral code.

All this is refreshing, wholesome, grateful. But let no one expect any other beneficial result from the investigation. Insurance will not be reformed: the policy-holder's interests will not be safer; misuse of funds will not be prevented. State control and supervision having utterly failed, more control by politicians is advocated. Some are clamoring for federal control of insurance,—Missionary Dryden among them, by the way; and no doubt federal control, if exclusive, would be "cheaper" than control of forty-five separate departments. The average man assumes that the insurance companies have enjoyed too much freedom, and jumps to the conclusion that restrictive legislation covering their investments, commissions, salaries, etc., will keep them honest and economical. But what are the facts?

That certain statutes designed to restrain them have been ignored or "waived" by complaisant officials is true; but they have paid well for this complaisance. More restriction will mean more bribery and more blackmail; the price of "*laissez faire*" will be higher, that's all.

It is not generally known that the companies have actually purchased legislation which has enabled them, not merely to hamper and thwart suspicious policy-holders, to avoid judicial examination and publicity, but to discourage and restrain competition.

Here is an interesting extract from the chapter on "Remedies" in Actuary Dawson's new book on "The Business of Life Insurance":

> First and foremost, the lessons of life insurance history enforced by recent events demonstrate that the formation of purely mutual companies, required by law to maintain solvency, should be encouraged. The organization of mutual societies to operate on unsound plans, on the other hand, should not be

permitted.

At present precisely the contrary is the fact. Mutual companies may be organized freely to operate on unsound assessment plans, but may not be organized at all under the legal reserve laws. Whether this came about through the cupidity of existing companies desiring a monopoly or through the stupidity of legislators who, influenced by no present interest calling for such powers, blindly shut the door against the enterprise of the future generations, does not much matter. It has resulted in the evils of assessmentism assuming gigantic proportions, and also in many grievous ills in life insurance companies operating on sound plans.

No remedy can go to the root of the matter, therefore, which does not provide for the organization of regular mutual companies.

Without indorsing these paragraphs as they stand, the statement as to the peculiar incidence and effect of the restrictive legislation is full of suggestion.

Mr. Dawson demands for insurance "freedom and publicity." His conception of freedom is inadequate, for he recommends several regulative and paternalistic measures that no consistent libertarian recognizes as necessary. Moreover, he does not even see the effects of denials of freedom in other directions—especially freedom in banking and credit organization—on the whole insurance business. The libertarian will recommend freedom as the remedy for the evils of insurance, exposed and hidden, in a more comprehensive sense, taking care to add that, provided competition is permitted and the policy-holder is let alone by the State, there is no occasion for tears over the losses of the careless, stupid, or indolent policy-holders who may be victimized by grafters and betrayers of trust. The policy-holders who, having power and choice, prefer the wildcat or doubtful companies to those known to

be conservative should pay the penalty of their folly. Has it not been said that against stupidity even the gods are helpless? S. R.

THE LETTERS OF IBSEN

If the writing of an autobiography by Ibsen would have prevented these "Letters" (Fox, Duffield & Co.) from being given to the world, it is well that we shall (doubtless) have to do without the autobiography: for no survey of a man's life written by himself near the end of it could quite reveal to us the character of the man, and especially his growth and development, as does a collection of his spontaneous utterances to friends and foes, given forth, evidently in many cases, without a thought of the possibility of their being given to the public. The most striking impression, perhaps, that a careful reading of this volume produces is that Ibsen's life has been a very contradictory one, and that he has been guilty of many inconsistencies; but we are accustomed to this in geniuses and strong individualities, for from Shakspere to Whitman it has not been uncommon. While I think it indisputable that the tendency of Ibsen's writings, in his letters as well as in his plays, is toward the magnification of the individual and the abolition of the State (as will be remembered from his dramatic works, and as will be seen from the quotations which I shall presently make from his letters), it is also quite true that the State Socialists could point to many expressions that seem to show him as sharing their faith. I am convinced, however, that these latter are chance and unguarded or unconsidered expressions, and not

really characteristic of his philosophy. He has often and unqualifiedly denounced the State, and yet he still continues to draw a pension from it; and in early life, when he had scant means, he made long and strenuous efforts to secure the pension, and to obtain "traveling grants" from the Norwegian government to enable him to go abroad and broaden and deepen his knowledge of the world. Of course he justified this acceptance of State aid by the contention that it was really due him on account of the fact that the government gave authors no protection, by international copyright arrangements, against the piracy of their works by foreign publishers: but even this contention is a decidedly Archistic one.

It is not, as I have intimated, difficult to show Ibsen's real opinion of the State, for he has many times characterized it in no mistakable terms. As early as 1865 he said, in a letter to Magdalene Thoresen (his mother-in-law), that "the downfall of the *State* would be regarded by our countrymen as the worst thing that could happen; but the downfall of a *State* cannot be a reason for sorrow." Equally unappreciative was he of so-called "political liberty," and he never lost an opportunity to inveigh against it. Here is a characteristic denunciation of both those State-Socialistic fetiches, which we find in a letter to George Brandes (to whom, by the way, Ibsen has written many of his best letters):

I shall never agree to making liberty synonymous with political liberty. What you call liberty I call liberties; and what I call the struggle for liberty is nothing but the constant, living assimilation of the idea of freedom. He who possesses liberty

otherwise than as a thing to be striven for possesses it dead and soulless; for the idea of liberty has undoubtedly this characteristic, that it develops steadily during its assimilation. So that a man who stops in the midst of the struggle and says "Now I have it" thereby shows that he has lost it. It is, however, exactly this dead maintenance of a certain given standpoint of liberty that is characteristic of the communities which go by the name of States—and this it is that I have called worthless. . . . The State is the curse of the individual. . . . The State must be abolished! In that revolution I will take part. Undermine the idea of the State; make willingness and spiritual kinship the only essentials in the case of a union; and you have the beginning of a liberty that is of some value. The changing of forms of government is mere toying with degrees,—a little more or a little less,—folly, the whole of it.

The great thing is not to allow one's self to be frightened by the venerableness of the institution. The State has its root in Time; it will have its culmination in Time. Greater things than it will fall; all religion will fall. Neither the conceptions of morality or those of art are eternal.

Very much in the same strain is a later letter to Björnson, which is particularly definite in its disapproval of the State and statecraft:

I am therefore very much afraid that social reforms with us are still far off. No doubt the politically privileged class may acquire some new rights, some new advantages; but I cannot see that the nation as a whole, or the single individual, gains very much by this. I admit, however, that, in politics too, I am a pagan; I do not believe in the emancipatory power of political measures; nor have I much confidence in the altruism and good will of those in power.

Twelve years earlier he had written to Brandes in about the same way:

The liberal press is closed to you? Why, of course! I once expressed my contempt for political liberty. You contradicted me at the time. Your fairy-tale of "Red Ridinghood" shows me that you have had certain experiences. Dear friend, the Liberals are freedom's worst enemies. Freedom of thought and spirit thrive best under absolutism.

It may appear from this that Ibsen's long residence

in Rome had given him slightly Machiavellian tendencies: but I do not think that this is the case. I think that the proper interpretation of the last sentence is that liberalism, as it was then known in Norway, had succeeded in establishing a certain amount of political independence and had then become stagnant and even reactionary, thus being a menace to real freedom, rather than an aid to it: on the other hand, it was doubtless apparent to Ibsen, as it is to many others, that, there being under absolutism no semblance of political liberty, the ever-nascent desire for freedom makes naturally for freedom of thought and spirit—an inevitable result of the inhibition of freedom of action.

That Ibsen is equally opposed to another of the essentials of democracy—namely, majority rule—is shown in a letter written in 1872 to Fredrik Gjertsen:

> There is no danger of my ever having, out of regard for myself and my own peace of mind, to surrender my fundamental principle in every field and domain,—that the minority is always in the right.

Ten years later he wrote to Brandes as follows:

> I receive more and more corroboration of my conviction that there is something demoralizing in engaging in politics and in joining parties. It will never, in any case, be possible for me to join a party that has the majority on its side.

Björnstjerne Björnson was Ibsen's best and most helpful friend in the early days, and to-day they are on terms of intimacy; but for some twelve years—from 1868 to 1880—they were estranged, and this was due to the fact that, while Ibsen was growing to believe less and less in the State, Björnson was looking

more toward State-Socialistic measures for the solution of sociological problems. Their association is interesting in that it brought out what practically amounted to Ibsen's declaration of independence. He was writing in 1865 to Björnson concerning an attempt to secure a grant for him from the government, which he feared would fail on account of the radical way in which he had been writing, and he began, parenthetically, to get disgusted with the whole matter. Thereupon he relieved his feelings in the following manner to his friend:

> But hang me if I can or will . . . . suppress a single line, no matter what these "pocket edition" souls think of it. Let me rather be a beggar all my life! If I cannot be myself in what I write, then the whole is nothing but lies and humbug.

As a fervid expression of his sentiments concerning the baleful influence of the State and politics upon art, witness the following extract from a letter to Brandes in 1870 about the changes that were then taking place in Italy:

> For every statesman that makes his appearance there, an artist will be ruined. And then the glorious aspiration after liberty—that is at an end now. Yes—I must confess that the only thing I love about liberty is the struggle for it; I care nothing for the possession of it.

It is certain from this that Ibsen thinks liberty only the means to the end, and in other letters he has emphasized this point.

There is good and abundant evidence, too, that Ibsen is a philosophical Egoist, the most striking indication of which is found in another letter to Brandes. From the following it is clear that he has a rational conception of life and its realities:

What I chiefly desire for you is a genuine, full-blooded Egoism, which shall force you for a time to regard what concerns you yourself as the only thing of any consequence, and everything else as non-existent. Now, don't take this wish as an evidence of something brutal in my nature! There is no way in which you can benefit society more than by coining the metal you have in yourself. I have never really had any very firm belief in solidarity; in fact, I have only accepted it as a kind of traditional dogma. If one had the courage to throw it overboard altogether, it is possible that one would be rid of the ballast which weighs down one's personality most heavily. There are actually moments when the whole history of the world appears to me like one great shipwreck, and the only important thing seems to be to save one's self.

Quite in line with this expression of Egoism is another utterance called forth by a statement by Brandes that the latter had no friends at home. Ibsen replied that he had fancied that for a long time, and added:

When a man stands . . . in an intimately personal relation to his life-work, he cannot really expect to keep his "friends." . . . Friends are an expensive luxury; and, when a man's whole capital is invested in a calling and a mission in life, he cannot afford to keep them. The costliness of keeping friends does not lie in what one does for them, but in what one, out of consideration for them, refrains from doing. This means the crushing of many an intellectual germ. I have had personal experience of it; and there are, consequently, many years behind me during which it was not possible for me to be myself.

This was in 1870, but as early as 1864 he was writing to Björnson that he knew that he was "incapable of entering into close and intimate relations with people who demand that one should yield one's self up entirely and unreservedly." These sentiments may not be wholly acceptable to a great many people, perhaps not even to all Anarchists; but a little retrospection and introspection ought to convince most thinking people that Ibsen's statement of the case is in keeping

with the experience of most of us under similar circumstances. This does not imply that one must abjure all friends, but there are friends *and* friends, and one is obliged to discriminate. There are friends whom one never is obliged to consider; but they are so rare that two of them are not often seen at the same time.

Religion is one of the questions upon which Ibsen is exceptionally contradictory. In 1865 in Rome he stated that he was reading nothing but the Bible, and not very long afterward he was berating certain kinds of theology and theologians. The truth of the matter is that he is religious at bottom, speaks reverently at times of God, and seems to believe in him; but with churches and religious movements he has had little or nothing to do, and particularly abhors their influence upon the people.

Björnson, who gladly accepted a pension, absolutely refused all official decorations, and was vexed with Ibsen for accepting them. The latter—consistent in this, at any rate—thought it puerile to take the one and not the other, and pointed out that, in order to be logical, "every kindly-meant festivity offered us, every toast, etc.," must likewise be rejected.

While on some occasions Ibsen showed himself very sensitive to criticism, he at other times expressed extreme contempt for the critics: "If they have been finding fault, then to the devil with them! Most critical fault-finding," he adds, "when reduced to its essentials, simply amounts to reproach of the author because he is himself—thinks, feels, sees, and creates, as himself, instead of seeing and creating in the way the critic would have done, if he had been able." He is

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not exactly oracular in this, but we must remember that he was often annoyed by inconsequential and stupid (and sometimes by malicious) criticism. But what writer is not?

It perhaps is worthy of mention in this country (it would not be in Europe) that Ibsen had a taste for speculation, and was a frequent investor in lottery tickets, as is witnessed by numerous requests made of his publisher in Copenhagen to purchase tickets for him. What would be thought of our foremost author (provided he could be identified!) if it were known that he regularly patronized lotteries?

It cannot be said that Ibsen has been very prolific as regards quantity, he having written, according to Henrik Jaeger's bibliography, only twenty-seven plays in fifty years; but of what tremendous significance some of them are! If all his plans had been fulfilled, the world would have a great many more, for a very frequently-recurring footnote throughout this volume is to the effect that this or that projected work, referred to in a letter, was never written.

It is difficult to say what, in a general summing up, the chief value of this book of Ibsen's "Letters," as there are so many things in it that give us a so much greater insight into the mind of this literary giant than we have ever had before; but I think it safe to say that, to Liberty's readers, the fact of transcending importance is that, in spite of all inconsistencies and contradictions, the volume conclusively demonstrates that the supreme tendency of Ibsen's life and work is toward the conservation of the individual and the destruction of the State. C. L. S.

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ANARCHISM IN ENGLAND FIFTY YEARS AGO

[Max Nettlau in London "Freedom."]

A Contribution towards the Elucidation of the Science of Society
By a Member of the London Confederation of Rational Reformers
"Liberty is the realization of the sovereignty of the individual"
(London: J. Watson, Truelove, Goddard.)

The pamphlet advertised under this title in the "Reasoner," of October 12 and 19, 1853, is, as far as I know, *the first Anarchist propagandist pamphlet published in England.* I cannot say where a copy of it may be found, but shall try to show to some extent under what circumstances the individualist Anarchist propaganda to which it belongs came into existence in the early fifties.

Godwin's "Political Justice" (1793) was never quite forgotten, and was even reprinted in the forties (2 vols., 12mo.). William Thompson's "Inquiry" (1824), however, though beginning in an almost Anarchist spirit, drifted into Owenism rather, and could not serve as a basis for an Anarchist movement. The mutualism of John Gray (1832, 1842, 1848) is logical, but dry, uninspiring, and anything but revolutionary. The individualism of W. Maccall is purely rhetorical, without aim, and purposeless. The rich Socialist literature of the forties contains no translation of Proudhon, no trace (as far as my limited knowledge goes) of any Proudhonist propaganda. It is wonderful that fifteen years of Chartism did not produce a single writer of mark who, after exposing the futility of the Chartist parliamentary panacea, would have arrived at Anarchism; the Owenites and simple coöperators of those times were anti-political, it is true, but that meant with most of them to acquiesce in any state of political oppression that might exist and just abstained from interfering with them. In France, after but one or two years of experience with representative assemblies (1848-49), parliamentarism was utterly rejected by several Socialists (Considérant, Rittinghausen, etc.) who advocated direct legislation; but the monstrous achievements of universal suffrage, the Napoleonic election and *plébiscite*, knocked the bottom out of this propaganda, which

did not to any extent touch England at all, though one of Considérant's pamphlets was translated (London, 1851). So the field from which Anarchism might have sprung was almost barren.

In 1850 Thornton Hunt began to publish the "Leader," a weekly review, which under his editorship (until January, 1852) was in some sort of contact with the advanced movements, but which later soon degenerated into a malignant anti-democratic paper. Probably the ideas of Josiah Warren (the time store) were known to the readers of Owen's papers by American letters for many years, but to a larger public some letters and reviews published since 1851 in the "Leader" probably first made Anarchism known. Herbert Spencer's "Social Statics" were given a very full review (March 15, 22, April 12, 1851), followed soon by four articles on Proudhon's French book, "*Idée Générale de la Révolution au XIX. Siècle*" (September 6, 13, 27, October 18, 1851). Here Proudhon's famous words of 1840 are reproduced, ending with: "I am an Anarchist," and it added: "By 'Anarchy' he means no more than what our admirable friend Herbert Spencer sets forth as the goal to which civilization is irresistibly tending,—*viz.*, the final *disappearance of government*, become unnecessary because men will have learned so to control themselves as to need no external coercion." In another place: "We caution the reader against a natural misapprehension of the word Anarchy, which is not used as synonymous with *disorder*; but simply what the Greek word implies,—*viz.*, absence of government, absolute liberty," etc.

In this paper, then, on July 19, 1851, was published a letter, signed "H. E." (New York, June 19), in which the writer, who went to America to join Cabet's Icarian Community, says: "Fourier is more known here than any other European Socialist writer, but Proudhon seems to me more adapted to meet the sympathies of American Socialism. He, in his paradoxical way, proclaims himself an Anarchist; and recently, in England, Herbert Spencer taught substantially the same thing, and tells you that government is not to be regarded as an institution, to be for ever needful to man." Then he tells how he got acquainted with Stephen Pearl Andrews's "The True Constitution of Government in the Sovereignty of the Individual" (The Science of Society," No. 1, New York, 1851). "Here," he says, "the principle of absolute individualism—or, if Proudhon prefers, we will say Anarchy (an-archè)—is laid down in plain English unconditionally, but the party profess to have made a

grand discovery, *viz.*, of a principle which will render the solute abolition of government possible and practicable f with at once, by such as choose." By this he refers to a then in the press: "Cost the Limit of Price" ("The Sc of Society," No. 2, New York, 1853).

These ideas of individualist Anarchism (which I need discuss here) were formed at the end of the [illegible]18 by Josiah Warren, an Englishman who had lived in Robe Owen's New Harmony community, and then began variou experiments by himself. His work, "Equitable Commerce New Development of Principles as Substitutes for Law Government," in part published in 1846, was edited in Ne York in 1852 by Stephen Pearl Andrews; it was followed "Practical Details in Equitable Commerce" (New York, "H. E." is Henry Edger (born in Sussex, 1820, die Versailles, 1888, a London barrister, later on an agricultu in Modern Times, indications taken from Positivist publi tions). He sent several other letters to "Ion," the pseud of a contributor to the "Leader." Next, on March 1, a lady signing "M." wrote to William Parr on a lecture by P. Andrews at the North American Phalanx, in New J who mentioned the existence of an "equitable" village Ohio, at that time; land had already been taken on Long Island, where the Modern Times community was soon t started (the "Leader," Sept. 6, 1851). On March 13, "Ion" publishes in the "Leader" a review of Andrew "Science of Society," which had also casually been men in the "Westminster Review." Henry Edger sends very notes on Modern Times, on "Trialville" on Long Island been called (November 21, 1851, in the "Leader" of Ma 27, 1852): "It seems to me not unworthy of remark tha heresy among social reformers should have sprung up si taneously on both sides of the Atlantic. Proudhon and drews alike discard association, alike proclaim Anarchy; Andrews, more intelligently to English ears, proclaims it sovereignty of the individual. Nor is Andrews alone her small party of thinkers, of whom Henry James and Dr. may be considered the chief, unite with him in teaching doctrine that the individual is above the institution. Soc is for man—not man for society." This is, of all the let Edger, the most descriptive and fullest of details scarce anywhere accessible now, I believe. The "Leader" (Aug and 21, 1852) reviews Henry James's "Lectures and Mi lanies" (New York, 1852), saying: "That his thoughts

in the direction of no government, whither Proudhon, Herbert Spencer, and others also tend, will startle only those unaccustomed to modern speculations. Everywhere the police becomes less and less a faith with thinking men; and the necessity for 'strong government' in the baser physical sense gets less recognition" (the latter qualification being the means by which the critic of the "Leader" usually retracts everything sensible he has advanced). I have looked up some of the writings of Henry James, but whatever good he may have had to say is hopelessly buried in religious twaddle, and it is impossible to resuscitate him as an Anarchist sympathizer of any use.

A year after his first visit H. Edger saw Modern Times again (letters in the "Leader," January 8, 1853); the first winter had been very trying. "For, there being no association, the first leaders cherishing a horror of *Fraternity-sentimentalism*, everyone had to shift for himself as he best could." In 1853 H. Edger spent five months at the North American Phalanx, but expresses himself strongly in favor of Modern Times (letter of July, 1853, the "Leader," September 10): "The intelligent portion of social reformers are nearly all looking in the direction of Modern Times. . . . Social reforms, then, which limit themselves to industrial organization, and studiously ignore the existence of the deepest and most widespread social disease, and the social want thereby indicated, may well be failures. . . . The Modern Times reform alone attempts to grapple with this master difficulty, and it does it in the way at once manly and philosophical—of boldly guaranteeing to woman her natural right and highest duty: that of supreme sovereignty in her own legitimate domain—that of the affections. This is the central idea of Fourier's speculations, the identity of which with the Modern Times movement is again very remarkable. A movement which starts by eliminating altogether the idea of *association*, or any *combination* of interests whatever, is coming to effectuate the very reforms which have in this country gone generally by the name of Associationism, while the associations themselves are sinking into inanition."

In this year Edger, who prepared to go to live at Modern Times, got hold of Positivism, which from that time onward he zealously propagated. Letters of January and February 5, 1854 (the "Leader," July 8, 1854), and of March, 1854 (dated Modern Times, *ib.* July 22), show how it was possible for men of different social ideas to live together at Modern Times. "Beyond our one principle [that of the sovereignty of the in-

dividual]," he says, "we are in no wise responsible for each other's doctrines any more than for each other's acts, here, in our village of Modern Times. But our principle does this one thing, and here I distinctly take my stand: it unites all of us here in a firm, final protest against the competency of political authorities to decide questions of morals."

I have not found further letters by Edger in the "Leader," but the little French volume, "*Lettres d'Auguste Comte . . . à Henry Edger et à M. John Metcalf*" (Paris, *Apostolat Positiviste*, 1889) contains Comte's letters to H. Edger at Modern Times, 1854-57, published by Jorge Lagarrigue. Early in 1854 Edger sent his "full adhesion" to Comte, who was delighted over another example "of aptitude towards noble submission with souls who had been most led astray by anarchical utopias" (March 16, 1854). They agreed, it seems, on the "affinity of Catholicism and Positivism," and Comte recommends "the particular importance of a dignified contact with the Jesuits, to whom, I presume, the supreme direction of the Catholic movement in America belongs. You will feel in this way that their success prepares our success." These are not jokes, as can be seen from the article, "*Auguste Comte et les Jésuites*," by G. Dumas ("*Revue de Paris*," October, 1898). Edger entertained Comte with a project of a sort of Positivist colony, which Comte at first rejected ("I cannot accept your proposal of a sort of Positivist monastery"); but Edger maintained his idea of an agricultural colony (1856), and tells Comte of the influence his ideas begin to exercise round him. Comte thinks that Modern Times may, some years hence, "really become a Positivist village," and after fifteen or twenty years the "spiritualist centre of a Positivist island [Long Island] which would soon form a separate State in the [United States] Federation."

If Comte addressed himself to the Jesuits, Robert Owen tried to convert the kings of the Holy Alliance, Fourier looked to Napoleon and later on to the never arriving millionaire, and the St. Simonians endeavored to win over a prince to their ideas. It was Blanqui who first struck the note of uncompromising revolutionary Socialism.

As to Henry Edger, we learn more about him and Modern Times from his pamphlet "Modern Times, the Labor Question, and the Family" (Modern Times, October 8, 1855), which contains a fair general statement and an exposition of Positivism. I ignore his second tract: "Brief Exposition of Religious Positivism" (1856). His third "Modern Times

Tract" is: "The Positive Community: Glimpse of the Regenerated Future of the Human Race. A Sermon Preached at Modern Times . . . 5th September, 1863" (Modern Times, 1861), which is curious, as it shows his endeavor to put forward something real and tangible about Positivist aims.

Modern Times is best known now by Moncure D. Conway's description, "Fortnightly Review," 1865; he visited it in 1860, and found all the Anarchist arrangements working very well. Of its end he reports there, as well as in his "Autobiography," 1904, that "soon after the [American Civil] war broke out, most of those I had seen there sailed from Montauk Point on a small ship, and fixed their tents on some peaceful shore in South America" ("Autobiography"). I hope that fuller accounts are in existence, but have not seen them.

To return to England, Modern Times was described in "Chambers's Journal," December 18, 1852—which I have not seen—and in a lecture by William Parr before the British Association at Glasgow, 1855, printed in the "Journal of the Statistical Society of London," June, 1856, pp. 127-143 ("Equitable Villages in America"). Here is mentioned "The Periodical Letter on the Principles and Progress of the Equity Movement," a monthly paper by Josiah Warren, since July, 1854, which, like the "Social Revolutionist" and similar papers of early Anarchist experiments in America, seems to be quite inaccessible in Europe.

These remarks led me a long way from the consideration of the pamphlet of October, 1853, mentioned above. I saw it noticed only in a paragraph of the "Leader," October 15, 1853, headed "New Society of Reformers," mentioning that this London Confederation of Rational Reformers—perhaps the first English Anarchist group—was "composed, we believe, of seceders from" J. Bronterre O'Brien's organization, the National Reform League. This was their "initiatory tract." Perhaps a paper that stands nearer to Bronterre O'Brien's party may contain further details; Ernest Jones's "People's Paper" contains none.

Meanwhile I can only add that the only other Anarchist publication of the fifties which I know is: "The Inherent Evil of all State Government Demonstrated"; being a reprint of Edmund Burke's celebrated essay, entitled, "A Vindication of Natural Society" [1756], with notes and an appendix, briefly enunciating the principles through which "Natural Society" may be realized. (London, Holyoake & Co., 1858, vi., 66 pp., 8vo). The notes and appendix are written by an unknown author

entirely in sympathy with Josiah Warren's ideas, and who had been in Modern Times himself. They contain no reference to any existing propaganda in England. Perhaps Mr. G. J. Holyoake (who knew so well Ebenezer Edger) will be able to supply the name of the author. . . .

I need hardly add that any further indications on this subject—*e. g.*, where this first English propagandist pamphlet may be found, etc.—are more than welcome.

P. S.—Two days after writing the above, when looking over a truly remarkable collection of early literature, my eye caught a four-page leaflet, bound up among currency tracts, which the owner, an old member of the Socialist League, with great kindness let me have, though he had only this copy of it. This is:

An Outline of the Principles, Objects, and Regulations of the London Confederation of Rational Reformers, founded August, 1853,
by a few private individuals of the middle and working classes.

This programme, published after the above-mentioned twelve-page tract No. 1, is an amalgamation of the Anarchist ideas of Warren and Andrews with the general demands of advanced reformers of the time. The ideas which the Americans tried to realize in small communities these Englishmen wanted applied to the whole country; hence some practical compromising, but also the idea of a broad and large propaganda.

The secretaries of the new organization were A. McN. Dickey and A. C. Cuddon. With the second name we re-enter known territory, for this is Ambrose Custon Cuddon, whose articles with strong Anarchist leanings in the "Cosmopolitan Review" (London, 1861—Feb. 1, '62)—also in the "Working M" (1861-62)—I have long since noticed.

As chairman of the "Working Man's" Committee he headed the deputation which greeted Bakounine on his escape from Siberia and arrival in London, January 10, 1862; he also spoke at the famous gathering in Freemason's Hall, August 5, 1862, when the same committee welcomed the French delegates to the International Exhibition and the idea of the International Working Men's Association was first alluded to in public. He had been in America early in 1858, and as early as 1841 he was honorary secretary of the "Home Colonization Society," an organization with somewhat more practical, more immediate intentions than the main Owenite body—as he explained in the

"New Moral World," Leeds, February 13, March 20, 1841. The "Dictionary of National Biography" records *Ambrose* Cuddon, a Catholic publisher and journalist in the twenties. A. C. Cuddon *may* have been his son; neither his articles in the sixties *nor the above-mentioned programme,* 1853, lack some useless religious phraseology. From such a comparison of ideas and style I conclude that A. C. Cuddon wrote the "Programme of the Rational Reformers" of 1853, and it is at least *probable to me* that he was also the author of the pamphlet in question, and very likely also of the notes to Burke's *Vindication,* 1858.

THE CLAIMS OF ANARCHISM

In an essay on "William Morris as an Exponent of Socialism," read by Samuel W. Cooper before the Browning Society, of Philadelphia, on December 14, 1905, the essayist made the following sympathetic statement of the claims of Anarchism:

The Anarchists say that all the ills of humanity come from monopolies or government,—that there has not been an effort made by society for its betterment which has not been met by an appeal to authority. Reformers have been burned at the stake, slavery upheld as a divine institution, countless millions slaughtered in wars of conquest and aggression, and, in general, the mass of humanity made the slaves of a few rulers. Class legislation, the prevention of competition, the monopolizing of the means of existence, have resulted in political knavery, civic unrighteousness, and commercial iniquity, and have indoctrinated mankind with a lust for criminal gain which has destroyed most of that which was good within him. The reflex action on humanity has poisoned the pure streams of morality which spring from the free earth. They claim that, under State Socialism, we would have a policeman to thump into us health, wealth, and wisdom, and to tell us what to eat, drink, or wear. There would be State doctors, State bar-tenders, State pie-inspectors, State nurseries, and State families.

They say there is no magic whatever in the name "State." The State, they say, is merely a corporation organized by authority, the powers of which have now been taken possession of by the wealthy and privileged classes. Its purposes are not the prevention of aggression, but committing aggression, the enforcing of codes of bad morals, and holding the people in slavery.

They say this corporation is supported largely by criminals,

who are the managers of the same, and that it commits more crimes of violence and more robbery than all the rest of society; that it manufactures criminals by means of its criminal laws; that, by permitting the organization of sub-State bodies, private corporations, it allows industrial buccaneers and privateers with roving letters of marque to embark on the high seas of commerce, ready to destroy all honest merchantmen; that its patent and copyright laws, its laws for restriction of free trade, and all the mass of class legislation which it has built up, are only the means whereby the poor are exploited and the monopolists made rich beyond the dreams of romance.

They say that all attempts to make people good by having corporate legislators pass certain enactments, and then filing them away in pigeon holes, is futile, and they claim that humanity cannot be raised, like hothouse flowers, but should be allowed natural growth. . . .

They claim that, under a natural condition, in which society was not interfered with by the police, morality would develop, and that, by unions, associations, societies, and clubs, organized for the purpose of carrying on any necessary operation of society, people would be far better off morally, mentally, physically, and financially, and that there would not be the enormous economic waste which is incident to governmental control.

They claim that by voluntary organization for the prevention of aggression mankind would be much safer than it can possibly be under present conditions.

These and many more things they claim, which it might be worth while to look into, for many of them seem to bear critical examination.

MR. SHAW'S POSITION

[Max Beerbohm in the London "Saturday Review."]

It must amuse him, whenever he surveys it; and I hope he will some day write a comedy around it. It bristles with side-lights on so many things—on human character in general, and on the English character in particular, and on the particular difficulties that genius encounters in England, and on the right manner of surmounting them.

For years Mr. Shaw was writing plays, some of which, by hook or crook, in holes and corners, were produced. They were witnessed, and loudly applauded, by such ladies and gentlemen as were in or around the Fabian Society. Not that these people

took their Socialist seriously as a playwright. They applauded his work in just the spirit in which, had he started a racing-stable, they would have backed his horses. He was taken with some measure of seriousness by such of the professional critics as were his personal friends and were not hide-bound by theatrical tradition. Here, they perceived, was something new in the theatre; and, liking to be in advance of the time, they blew their trumpets in their friend's honor. The rest of the professional critics merely sniffed or cursed, according to their manners. The public took no notice at all. Time passed. In Berlin, Munich, Vienna, and elsewhere, Mr. Shaw was now a popular success. Perhaps in the hope that England had caught an echo of this exotic enthusiasm, Messrs. Vedrenne and Barker ventured to produce "John Bull's Other Island." England had not caught that echo. There was only the usual little *succès d'estime*. But, not long after its production, the play was witnessed by a great lady, who advised an august person to witness it; and this august person persuaded a person yet more august to witness it. It had been withdrawn, meanwhile; so there was "a command performance." All the great ladies, and all the great gentlemen, were present; also, several paragraphists. That evening Mr. Shaw became a fashionable craze; and within a few days all London knew it. The Savoy restaurant is much frequented by fashion and by paragraphy; and its revenues are drawn mainly from the many unfashionable people who go to feast their eyes on the people who are fashionable beyond dispute. No large restaurant can live by the aristocracy alone. Nor can even a small theatre. Mr. Shaw "pays" now, because now the English middle class pays to see that which is seen and approved by the English upper class, and (more especially) to see the English upper class. Whether either of these classes really rejoices in Mr. Shaw, as yet, is a point on which I am doubtful. I went to see "Man and Superman" a few nights ago. The whole audience was frequently rocking with laughter, but mostly at the wrong moments. (I admit that Mr. Shaw's thoughts are often so profound, and his wit is always so swift, that to appreciate his plays rightly and fully at a first hearing is rather an achievement.) But it was obvious that the whole audience was very happy indeed. It was obvious that Mr. Shaw is an enormous success. And in the round-about way by which success has come to him is cast a delicious light on that quality for which England is specially notable among the nations.

His success is not gratifying to the critics. To those critics

who are incapable of exercising their brains, and who have always resented Mr. Shaw vehemently, it is, of course, galling to find themselves suddenly at odds with public opinion - the opinion which they are accustomed to "voice." Having slated "John Bull," and slated "Man and Superman," they must have been in a fearful dilemma about the play produced at the Court Theatre last week, "Major Barbara." Perhaps this, too, was going to "catch on." Would it not be safer to climb down, and write moderate eulogies? I suspect it was stupidity as much as pride that diverted them from this ignominious course. They really could not make head or tail of the play. They were sure that this time Shaw really had come a cropper—had really delivered himself into their hands. "A success, are you? Pet of the public, are you? We'll see about that. We'll pet-of-the-public you. We'll" etc., etc. The old cries—"no dramatist," "laughing at his audience," and the like—were not sufficient, this time. "Brute" and "blasphemer" were added. In the second act of the play, Mr. Shaw has tried to show some of the difficulties with which the Salvation Army has to cope. A ruffian comes to one of the shelters in quest of a woman who has been rescued from living with him. A Salvation "lass" bars his way, and refuses to yield. He strikes her in the face. The incident is not dragged in. It is necessary to the purpose of the whole scene. Nor has anyone ventured to suggest that it is an exaggeration of real life. Nor is the incident enacted realistically on the stage of the Court Theatre. At the first performance, anyhow, the actor impersonating the ruffian aimed a noticeably gentle blow in the air, at a noticeably great distance from the face of the actress impersonating the lass. I happen to be particularly squeamish in the matter of physical violence on the stage. I have winced at the smothering of Desdemona, for example, when it has been done with anything like realism. The mere symbolism at the Court Theatre gave me not the faintest qualm—not, I mean, the faintest physical qualm: æsthetically, of course, I was touched, as Mr. Shaw had a right to touch me. And it seems to me that the critics who profess to have been disgusted and outraged must have been very hard up for a fair means of attack. Equally unfair—for that it may carry conviction to the minds of people who have not seen the play—is the imputation of blasphemy. Mr. Shaw is held up to execration because he has put into the mouth of Major Barbara certain poignant words of Our Lord. To many people, doubtless, it is a screamingly funny joke that a female should have a military prefix. Also, there is no doubt that Mr. Shaw's play

abounds in verbal wit, and in humorous situations. But the purport of the play is serious; and the character of Major Barbara is one of the two great factors in it. With keenest insight and sense of spiritual beauty, Mr. Shaw reveals to us in her the typical religious fanatic of her kind. Sense of spiritual beauty is not one of the qualities hitherto suspected in Mr. Shaw; but here it certainly is; and I defy even the coarsest mind not to perceive it. (To respect it is another matter.) When Major Barbara comes to the great spiritual crisis of her life, and when she believes that all the things she had trusted in have fallen away from her, what were more natural than that she should utter the words of agony that are most familiar to her? That any sane creature in the audience could have been offended by that utterance I refuse to believe. It was as inoffensive as it was dramatically right. And the critics who have turned up the whites of their eyes, and have doubtless prejudiced against the play many worthy people who have not, like them, had the opportunity of seeing it, must submit to one of two verdicts,—insanity or hypocrisy. I have no doubt that of these two qualities they will prefer to confess the latter. It is more typically British.

To that delicate comedy, "Mr. Shaw's Position," the parts played by these critics seem rather crude. There is a subtler fun in the parts played by some of the superior critics,—the critics who were eager to lend helping hands to Mr. Shaw in the time of his obscurity. So long as he was "only *so* high," and could be comfortably patted on the head, they made a pet of him. Now that he strides gigantic, they are less friendly. They seem even anxious to trip him up. Perhaps they do not believe in the genuineness of his growth, and suspect some trick of stilts. That would be a quite natural scepticism. A great man cannot be appreciated fully by his intimate contemporaries. Nor can his great success be ever quite palatable to them, however actively they may have striven to win it for him. To fight for a prince who has to be hiding in an oak-tree is a gallant and pleasant adventure; but, when one sees the poor creature enthroned, with a crown on his head and a sceptre in his hand, one's sentiments are apt to cool. And thus the whilom champions of Mr. Shaw's virtues are now pre-occupied mainly with Mr. Shaw's defects. The old torches are still waved, but perfunctorily; and the main energy is devoted to throwing cold water. Whereas the virtues of Mr. Shaw used to be extolled with reservations for the defects, now the defects are condemned with reservations for the virtues. Mr. Shaw, it is insisted, cannot draw life; he can only distort it. He has no knowledge of human nature; he is but a theorist. All his characters are but so many incarnations of himself. Above all, he cannot write plays. He has no dramatic instinct, no theatrical technique. And these objections are emphatically reiterated (often with much brilliancy and ingenuity) by the superior critics, while all the time the fact is staring them in the face that Mr. Shaw has created in "Major Barbara" two characters - Barbara and her father - who live with an intense vitality; a crowd of minor characters that are accurately observed (though some are purposely exaggerated) from life; and one act—the second—which is as cunning and closely-knit a piece of craftsmanship as any conventional playwright could achieve, and a cumulative appeal to emotions which no other living playwright has touched. With all these facts staring them in the face, they still maintain that Mr. Shaw is not a playwright.

That theory might have held water in the days before Mr. Shaw's plays were acted. Indeed, I was in the habit of propounding it myself. I well remember that, when the two volumes of "Plays, Pleasant and Unpleasant" were published, and the ordinary dramatic criticisms in this Review were still signed G. B. S., I wrote here a special article in which I pointed out that the plays, delightful to be read, would be quite impossible on the stage. This simply proved that I had not enough theatrical imagination to see the potentialities of a play through reading it in print. When, later, I saw performances of "Mrs. Warren's Profession," "The Devil's Disciple," and "You Never Can Tell," I found, to my great surprise, that they gained much more than they lost by being seen and not read. Still, the old superstition lingered in my brain. I had not learnt my lesson. When "Man and Superman" was published, I called it "Mr. Shaw's Dialogues," and said that (even without the philosophic scene in hell) it would be quite unsuited to any stage. When I saw it performed, I determined that I would not be caught tripping again. I found that as a piece of theatrical construction it was perfect. As in "John Bull's Other Island," so in "Major Barbara" (excepting the aforesaid second act), there is none of that tight construction which was in the previous plays. There is little story, little action. Everything depends on the inter-play of various types of character and of thought. But to order this process in such a way that it shall not be tedious requires a very great amount of technical skill. During the third act of "Major Barbara," I admit, I found my attention wandering. But this aberration

was not due to any loosening of Mr. Shaw's grip on his material. It was due simply to the fact that my emotions had been stirred so much in the previous act that my cerebral machine was not in proper working order. Mr. Shaw ought to have foreseen that effect. In not having done so, he is guilty of a technical error. But to deny that he is a dramatist merely because he chooses, for the most part, to get drama out of contrasted types of character and thought, without action, and without appeal to the emotions, seems to me both unjust and absurd. His technique is peculiar because his purpose is peculiar. But it is not the less technique.

There! I have climbed down. Gracefully enough to escape being ridiculous? I should like mine to be a "sympathetic" part in "Mr. Shaw's Position."

MUST WE LEARN THE WORST FROM ADLER?

[New York Truth Seeker.]

Dr. Felix Adler twenty-five years ago was reputed to be something of a radical, but he has not kept up with the procession. He has recently delivered a lecture before the Ethical Society on the Bernard Shaw plays, and has placed himself squarely beside Anthony Comstock and the New York police for the suppression not only of "Mrs. Warren's Profession," but "Man and Superman" as well. He made the rather curious argument that the desire to be acquainted with life as it is is not a wholesome one, and that there is much going on which we can afford not to know. This is the same Dr. Adler who once went into the slums to see life as it was, and came back to report to his society that he had met little girls of ten and eleven years who had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge. Apparently, if the public is to know the worst, the president of the Ethical Society would prefer it should be learned from him rather than from Mr. Shaw and the other "literary Anarchists."

THE MOTHERHOOD FETICH

I had intended to write the following paragraph for "Liberty," but the New York "Evening Post" was too quick for me:

President Roosevelt must be startled to find that a mere representative in congress can beat him at his own game of inventing thundering platitudes about motherhood. Morris Sheppard, of Texas, has done the trick:

When the president of the United States, with all the glamour of his great office, steps into the presence of an American mother, he is in the presence of his superior.

There is a motto to frame and hang on the walls of every nursery. If Mr. Sheppard is not invited to address each mothers' club in this broad land, the ladies are ungrateful wretches. For our part, however, we are unable to understand why the forcible expulsion of Mrs. Miner Morris from the executive offices is rendered more heinous because she is a mother. Had she been the most austere of spinsters, the indiscretion of Assistant Secretary Barnes and the stupidity and superfluous violence of the police would have been exactly the same in intention and effect. These officious men—perhaps some of them are fathers—never stopped to inquire whether Mrs. Morris had children; and even she herself might have regarded the question as irrelevant.

A NEW YEAR'S WISH

[New York Times]

On a mountain top that almost touched the stars,
I stood one day and saw the earth throughout.
All living things and all their wants I knew.
No care nor fear that mankind had
Was screened from me, and I the power owned
To do for all as I had wished to do.

I did for each whatever I deemed best,
And then came back to earth
To live with the content.
But soon I saw that each one had
A wish to live as he found best,
And far off from the way I meant.

And so I wish
That those who ever seek
To make me live as they,
Will stop to think,
And learn from honest truth
Whose is the better way.

Abraham Gruber.

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